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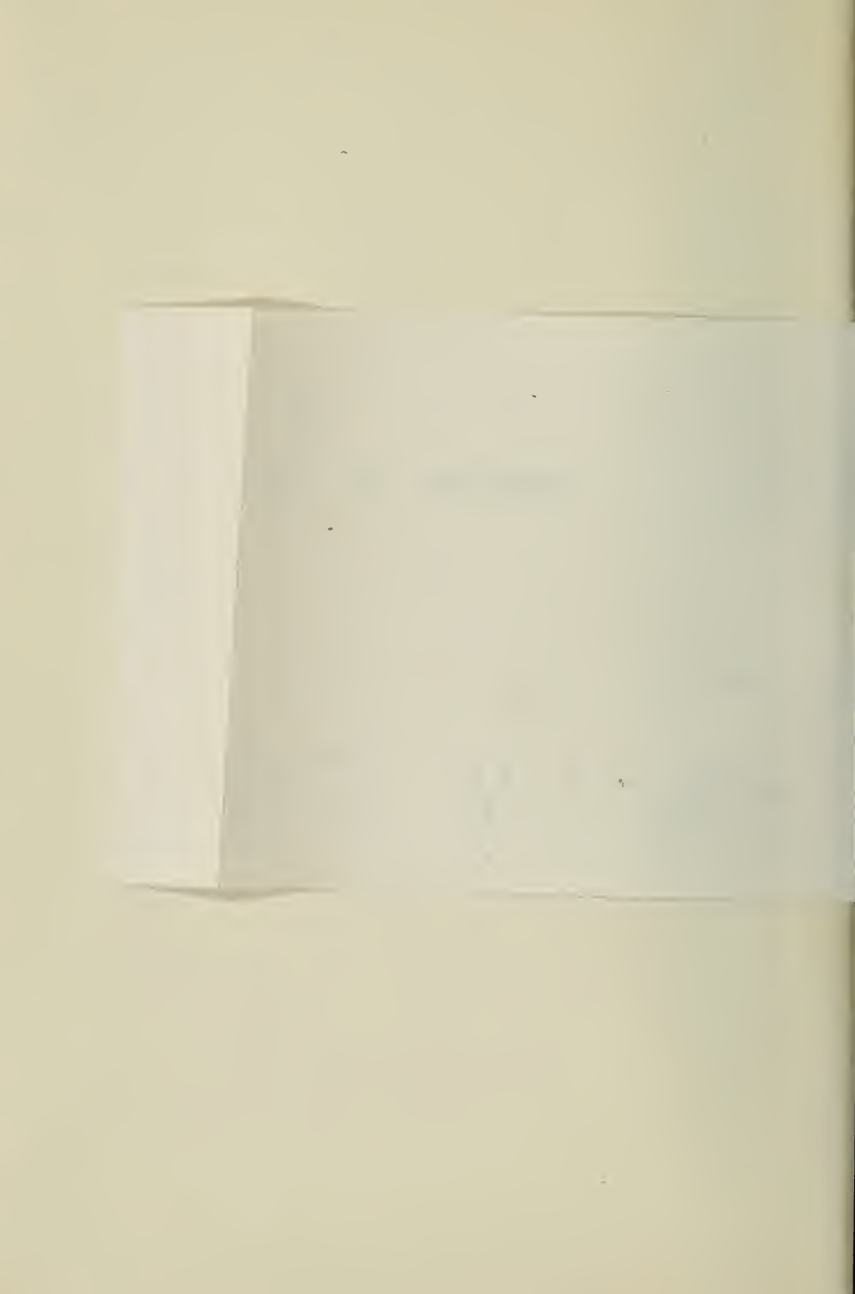


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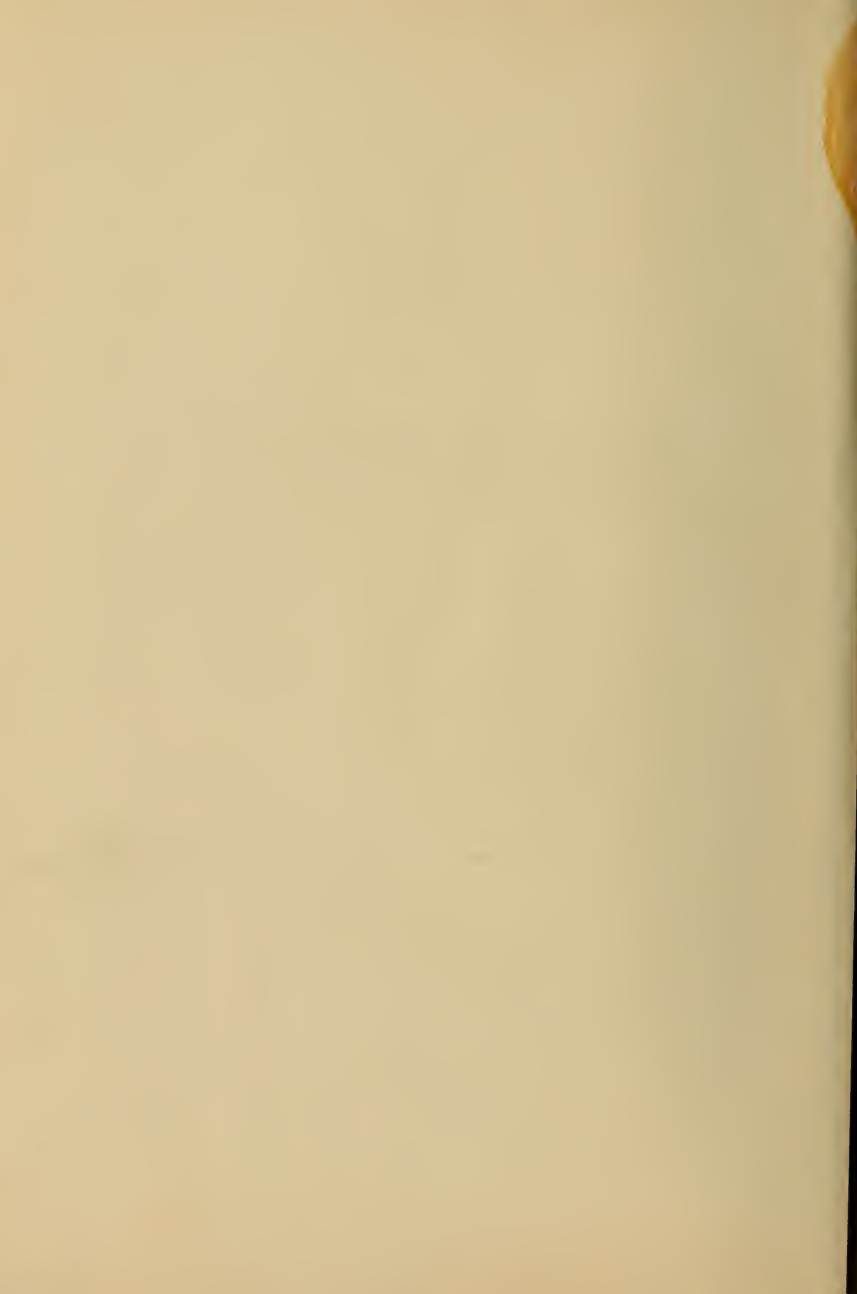
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Rubáiyát of a Motor Car







Rubáiyát of a Motor Car

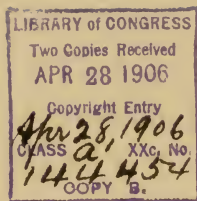
By
Carolyn Wells

Author of
**Idle Idyls, Folly For The Wise,
A Nonsense Anthology, &c.**



With illustrations by
Frederick Strothmann

New York
Dodd, Mead Company
1906



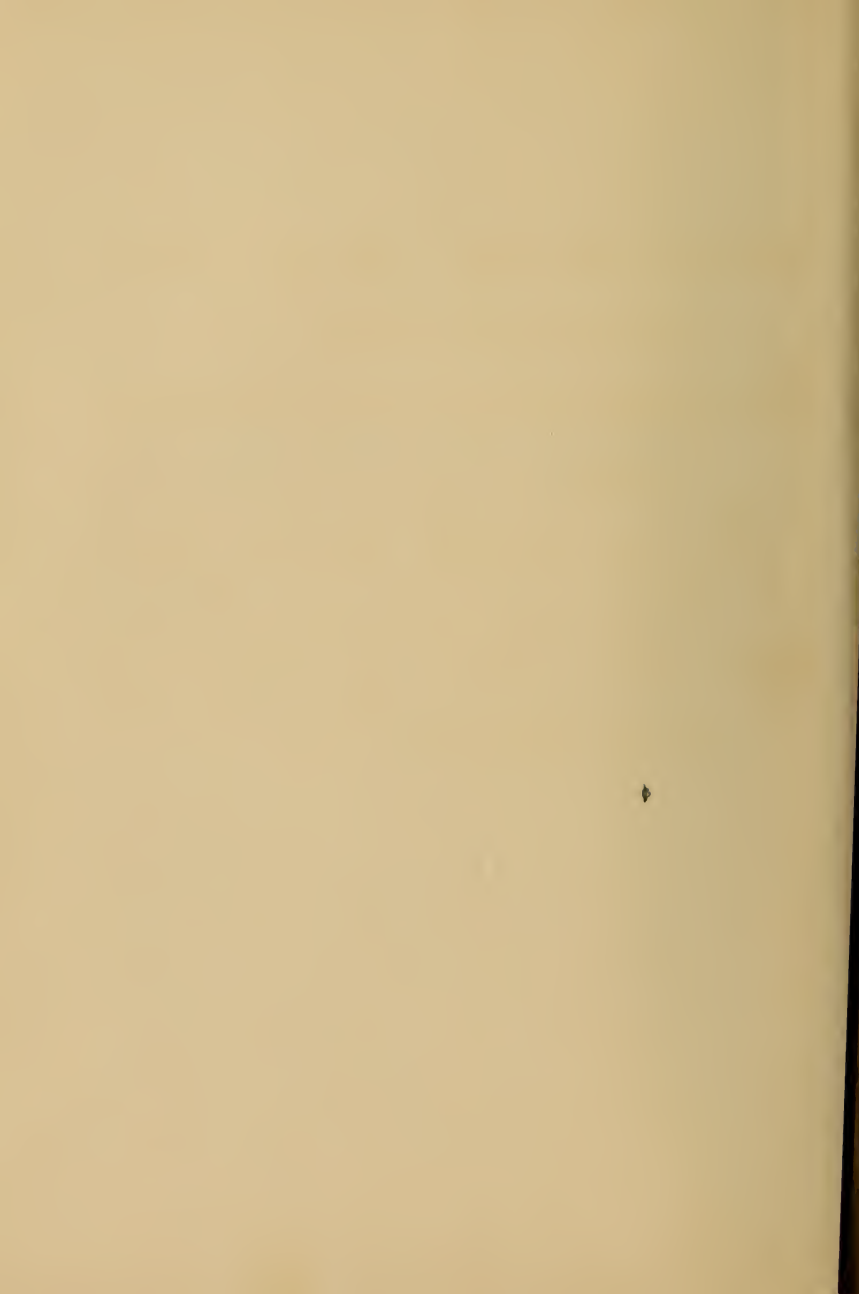
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Published, March, 1906



TTo the crank that
makes the machine go



Rubāiyāt of a Motor Car



**Wake ! For the “Honk,” that
scatters into flight
The Hens before it in a Flapping
Fright,
Drives straight up to your
Door, and bids you Come
Out for a Morning Hour of
Sheer Delight !**

Come, fill the Tank, adjust the
Valve and Spring,
Your Automobile Garments
'round you Fling;
The Bird Of Time wants but
to get away;
(I think that name's a rather
Clever Thing!)

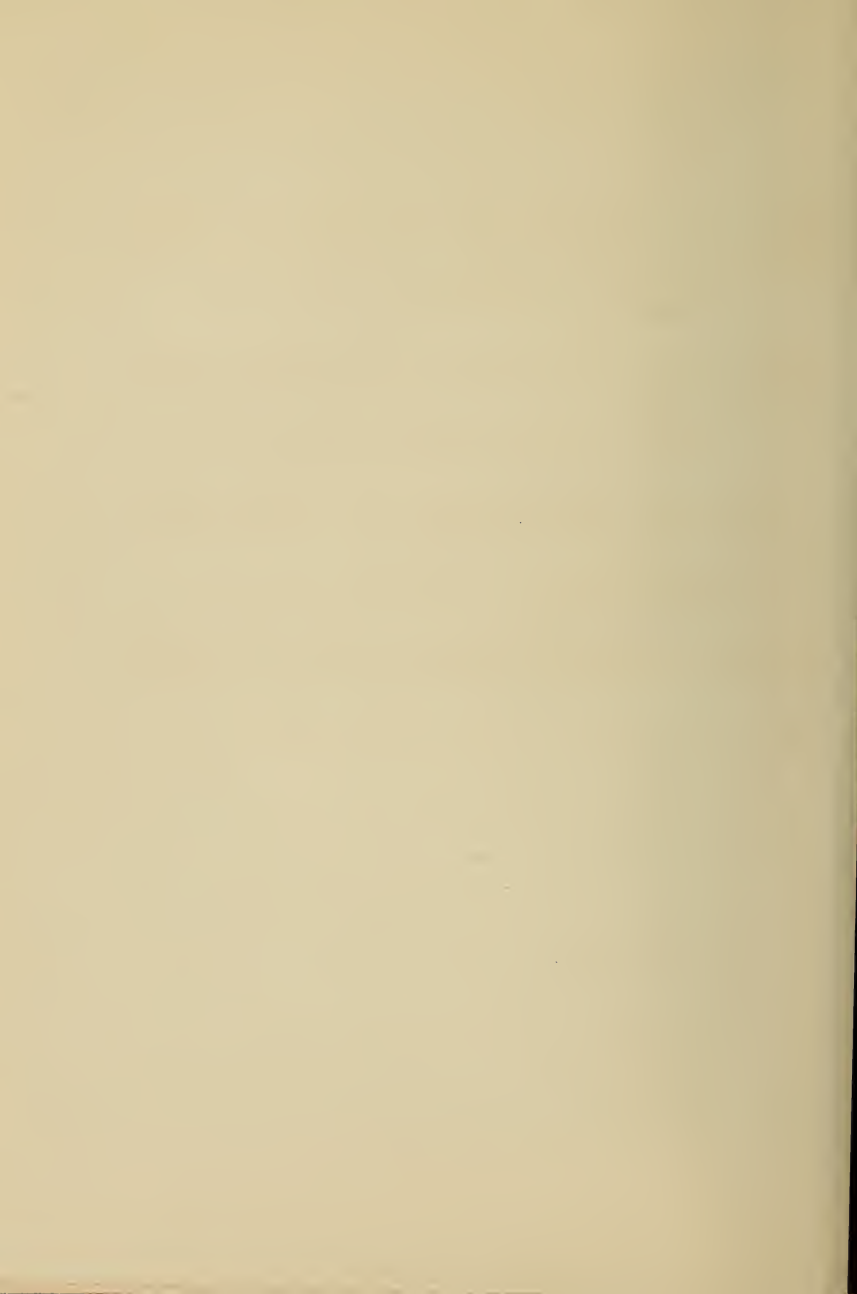
And as the Corkscrew drawing
out the Cork,
I crank my Car and try to
make it work.
You know how little while
we have to Ride;
And once departed, may go to
New York.

Whether at Naishápúr or Baby-
lon,
Whether the Car shall jerk or
sweetly run,
The Wine of Life is in a
Motor Trip,
(Though all the Parts keep
breaking One by One!)

NEW YORK 50M



Strothmann



**Why, if the Soul can know this
Glorious Game,
All other Stunts seem dry and
dull and tame;
This is the ultimate, triumph-
ant Joy,
Automobile Elation is its Name!**

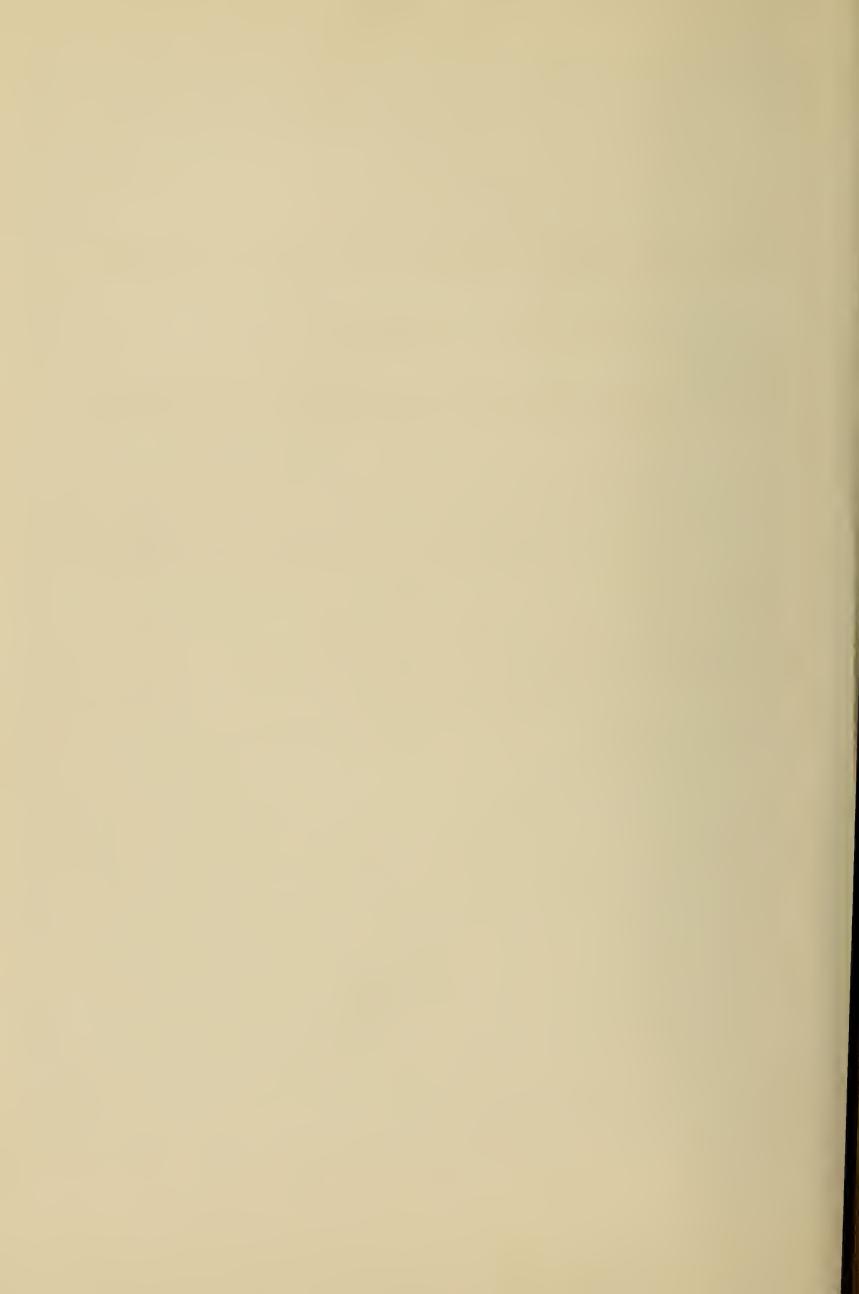
Would you your last remaining
Thousands spend
About the Secret? Quick about
it, Friend!

A Hair perhaps divides This
Make from That—
And on that Hair, prithee, may
Life depend!

Now the New Year reviving old
Desires,
The thoughtful Soul to Cata-
logues retires;
He scorns his Last Year's
Runabout, and to
The Newest, Biggest Touring
Car aspires!

Each Year a Hundred Models
brings, you say;
Yes, but who buys the Car of
Yesterday?
And every Mail brings in New
Catalogues
That make a Last Year's Model
fade away!





Waste not your Hour nor in
the Vain pursuit
Of Demonstrators who will loud
Dispute;

“This one is Best, because
it’s painted Red!”

“That One, because it has a
Louder Toot!”

'Tis only a Beginner, young and
green,
Who Thinks he wants an Odor-
less Machine;
What Fragrance is to Rose
or Violet,
So to the Motor-Car is Gaso-
lene.

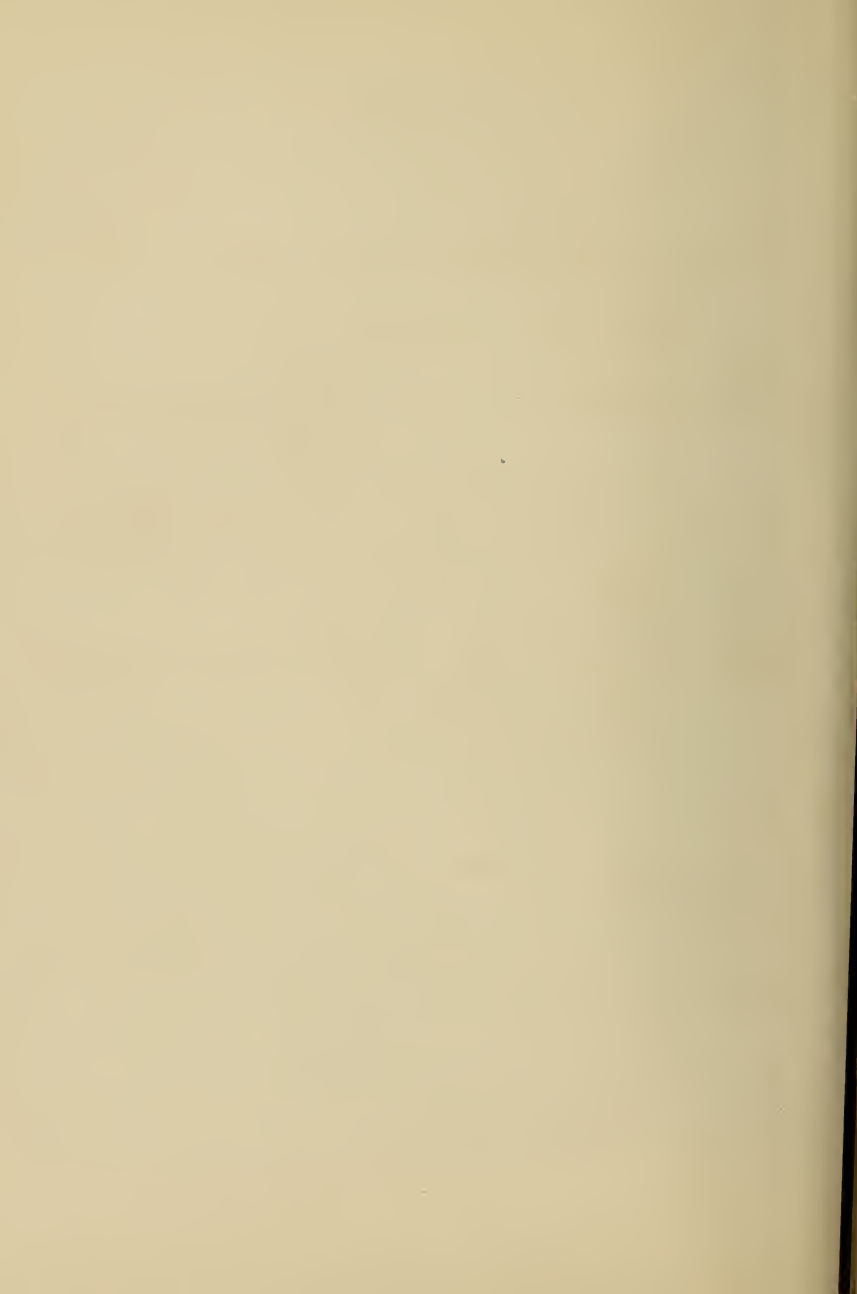
Some advocate Gear-Driven
Cars, and Some
Sigh for a Jockey-pulley yet to
come;

Oh, crank your Car, and
let the old thing Go!
Nor heed the Brake upon your
Sprocket Drum.

'Tis but a Toy on which one
spends a Pile,
And Brags about it for a Little
While;
Ambition rises—and the Fool-
ish Man
Sighs, and prepares to buy
Another Style.



Serothmann.



They say The Lion and The
Lizard keep
The Record for Hill-climbing,
rough and steep;
I do not know those Makes.
I'll hunt them up.
I'd like to Buy one, if they're
not too Cheap.

You know, my Friends, with
what a Brave Carouse
I put a Second Mortgage on
my House
So I could buy a Great Big
Touring-Car,
And run down Chickens, Dogs,
and even Cows!

For it my Future Income did I
owe,
And with mine own Hand
wrought to make it go ;
And this was all the Wisdom
that I reap'd—
“We cost like Thunder and like
Lightning go!”

**And those “Accessories” Adver-
tisements
That offer you Supplies at slight
Expense;
You read them over, and
they always make
Your own Belongings look like
Thirty Cents.**

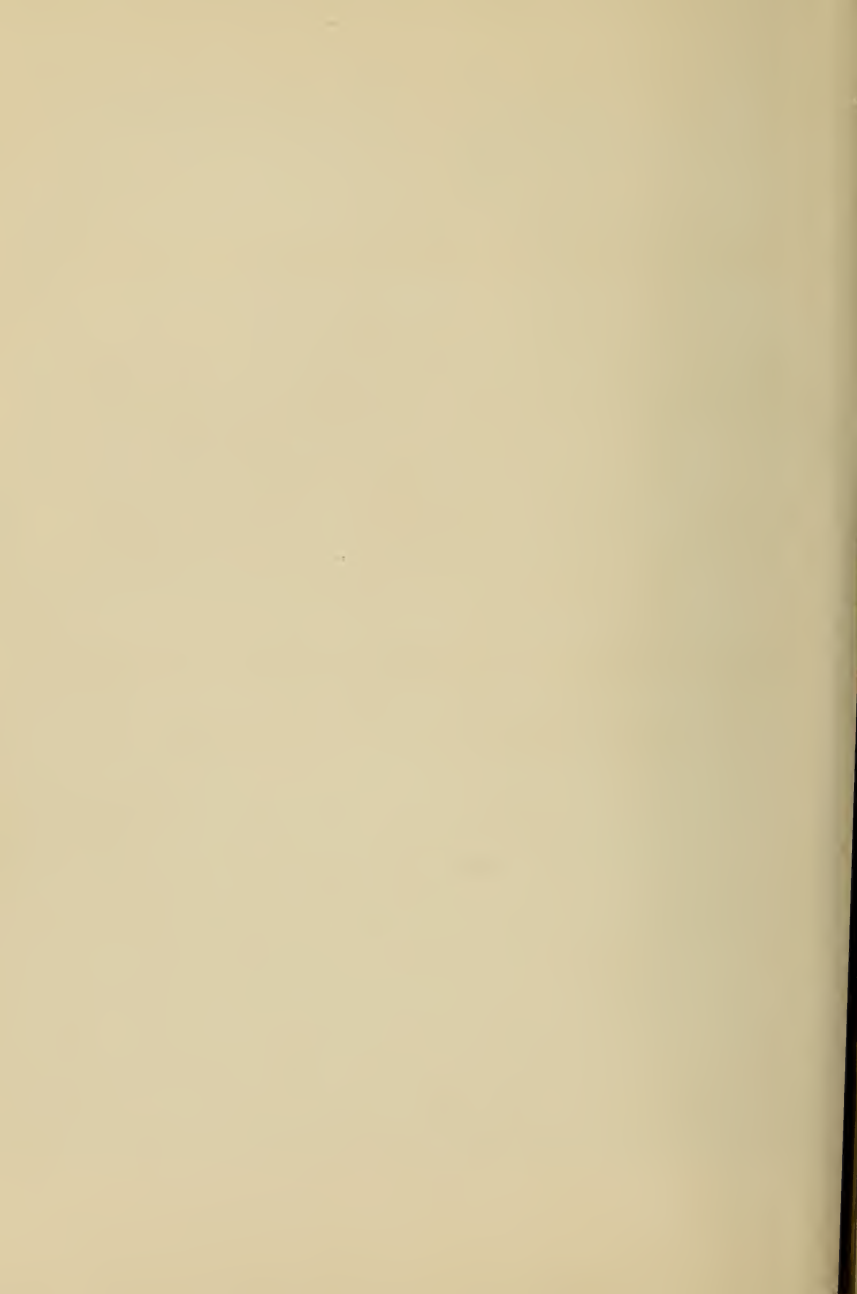
Look to the Blowing Horn
before us—"Lo,"

"Gaily," it says, "Into the World
I blow!"

Behold its lovely Bulb, and
Sweet-toned Reed,—
(The most Expensive in the
Garden Show!)

I had to have a Snakeskin
Auto-Coat,
A Leather Foot-Muff, lined with
Thibet Goat;
A Steering-Apron, and a
Sleeping-Bag;
For these things Help a Motorer
to Mote.





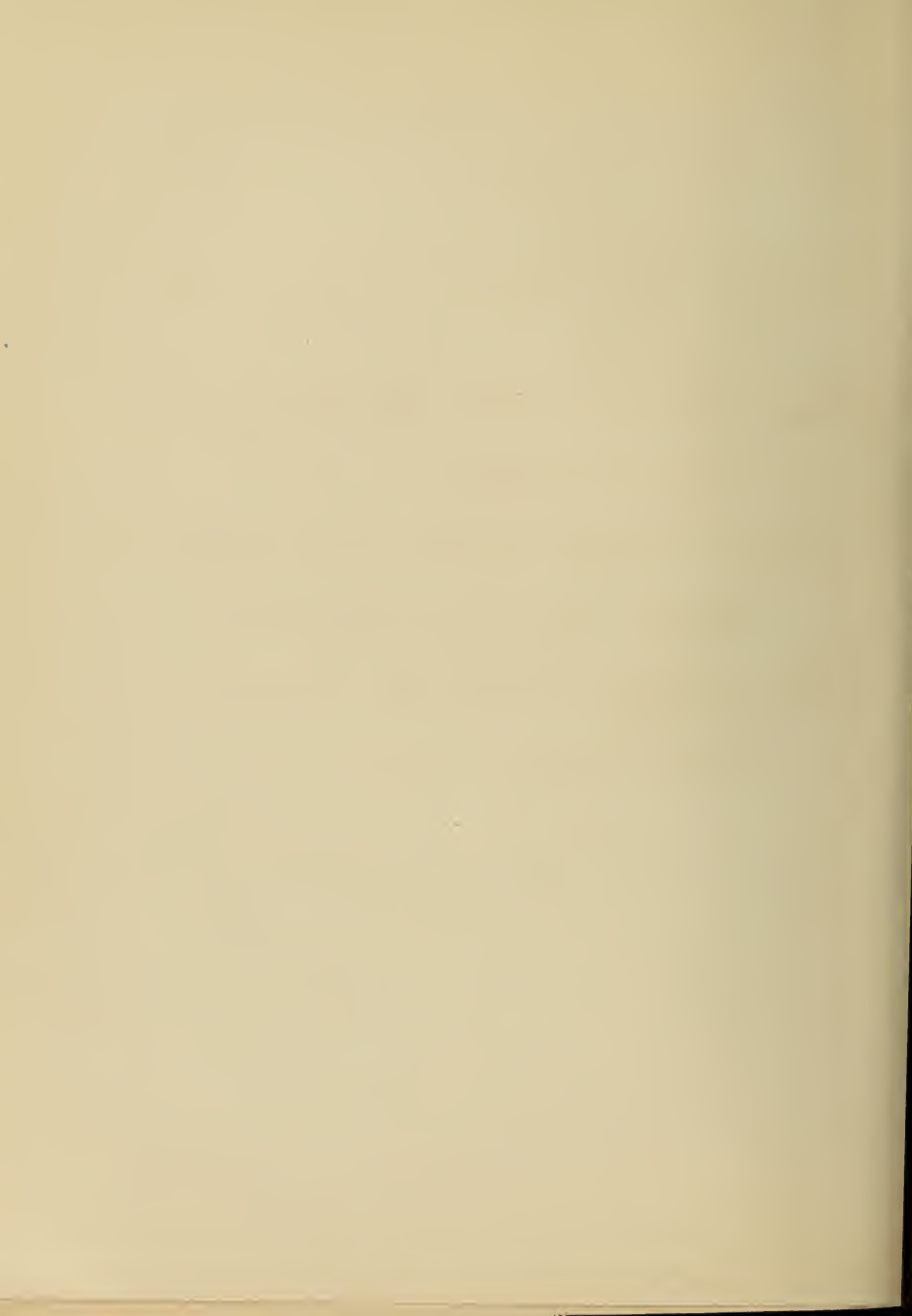
And then my Luncheon-Kit, and
Hamper, swell,
Robbed me of Many a Hard-
Earned Dollar! Well,
I often wonder what the
Dealers buy
One-half so Easy as the Folks
they Sell.

Myself when Young, did eagerly
frequent
Garage and Club, and heard
Great Argument
About it and about,—yet
evermore
Came out more Addled than
when in I went.

Indeed, with my big Car I've
run so long
It seems to me there's Always
something Wrong;
Faulty Ignition, or a Blown
Out Shoe,
Or maybe the Compression is
too Strong.

Then to the Laughing Face that
 lurks behind
The Veil, I lifted up mine Eyes
 to find
 Two pouting Lips, demurely
 murmuring,
“I don’t see why you Ever
 bought This Kind!”





Indeed, I've learned to treat it
as a Joke

When Nuts work loose, or Car-
buretors choke;

And then, and then—the
Spring, and then the Belt,

A Punctured Tire, or Change-
Speed Lever broke!

A Look of Anguish underneath
the Car,

Another Start,—a Squeak,—a
Grunt,—a Jar!

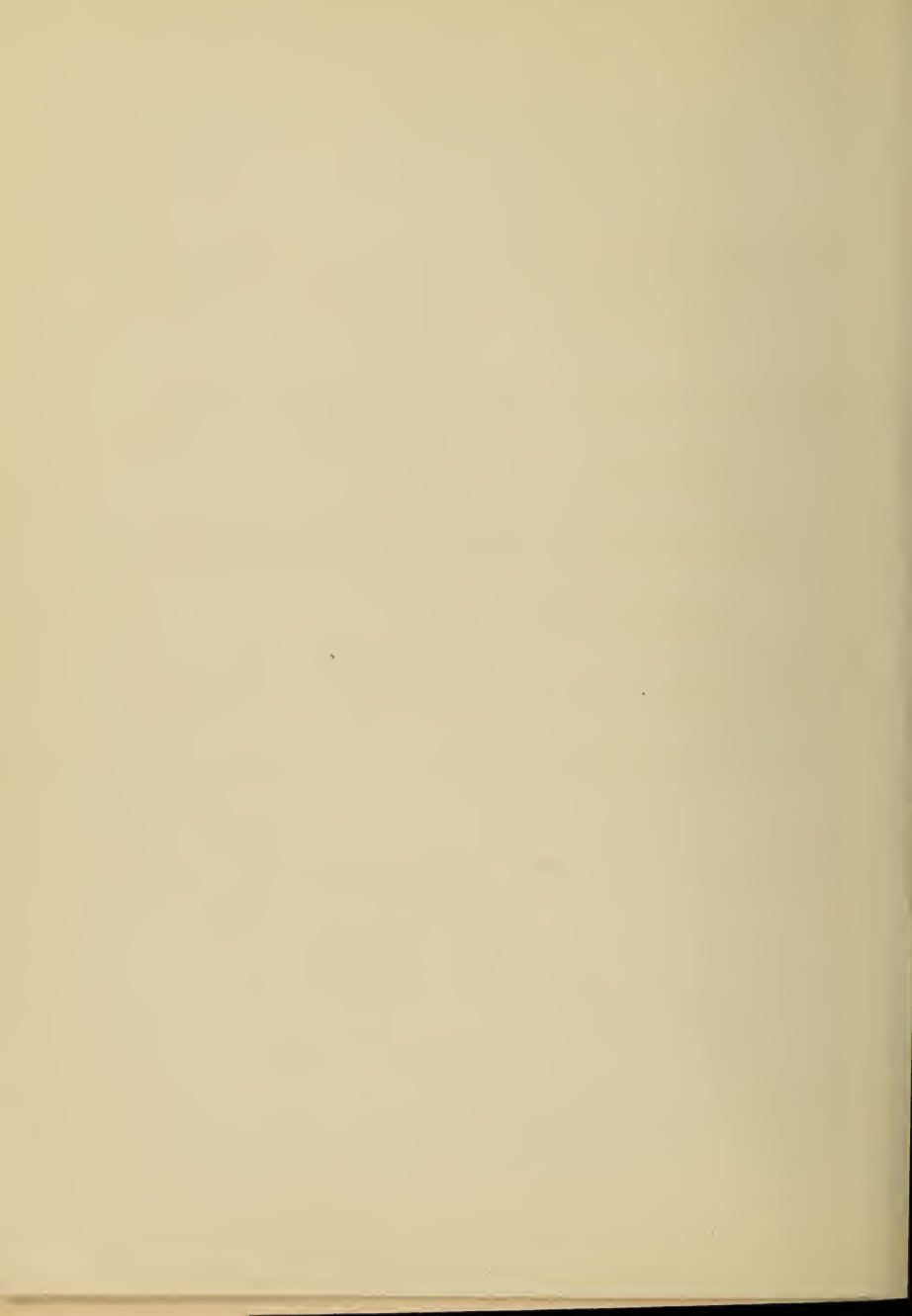
The Aspiration Pipe is work-
ing loose!

The Vapor can't get out! And
there you are!

For I remember Stopping by
the Way
To tinker up the old Machine
one day,
And with a Reckless and
Unbridled Tongue,
I muttered,—Well, I Wouldn't
like to say!

Why, even Saints and Sages
would have cuss'd
If, speeding through the World,
their Tires had Bust!
Like Foolish People now,
whose words of Scorn
Are utter'd while their Mouths
are Stopt with Dust.





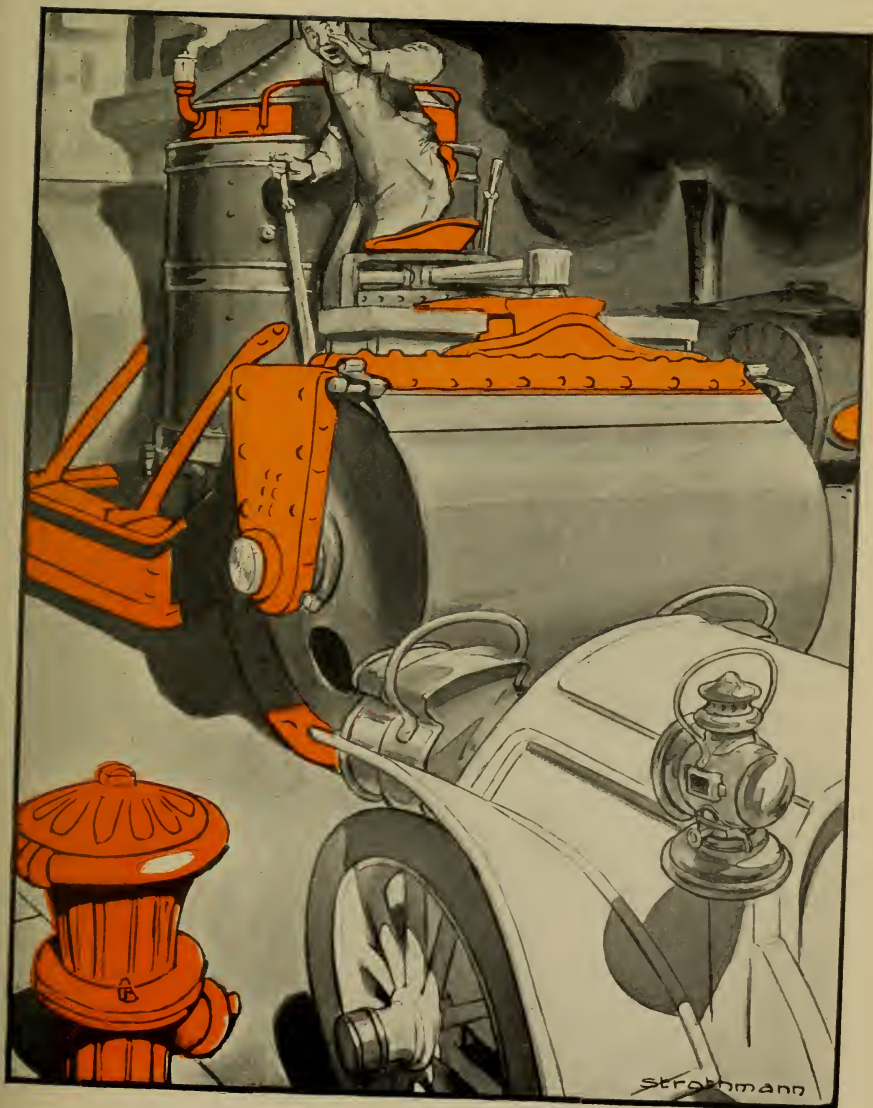
When suddenly, an Angel Shape
was seen
Approaching in an Up-to-date
Machine,
Bearing a Vessel which he
offered me,
And bid me smell of it. 'Twas
Gasolene!

The Stuff that can with Logic
Absolute

The Two-and-Seventy Jarring
Parts confute;

The Sovereign Alchemist that
in a trice

A Drop of Oil will into Power
transmute.





Whose Secret presence through
the Motor's Veins
Running Quicksilver-like defies
our pains;
Cutting up tricks from here
to Jericho,—
We try to start the Car,—but
it Remains!

Strange, is it not, that of the
Myriads who
Have Empty Tanks and know
not what to do,
Not one will Tell of it when
he Returns !
As for Ourselves,—why, we
Deny it too.

What! Out of Oily Nothing
to invoke

A Powerful Something, born of
Fire and Smoke!

An Unremitting Pleasure, if
it goes;

An Everlasting Worriment, if
broke.

We are no other than a Moving
Row
Of Automobile Cranks that
come and go.
And what with Goggles and
Tale-windowed Veils,
In Motoring Get-up, we're a
Holy Show!

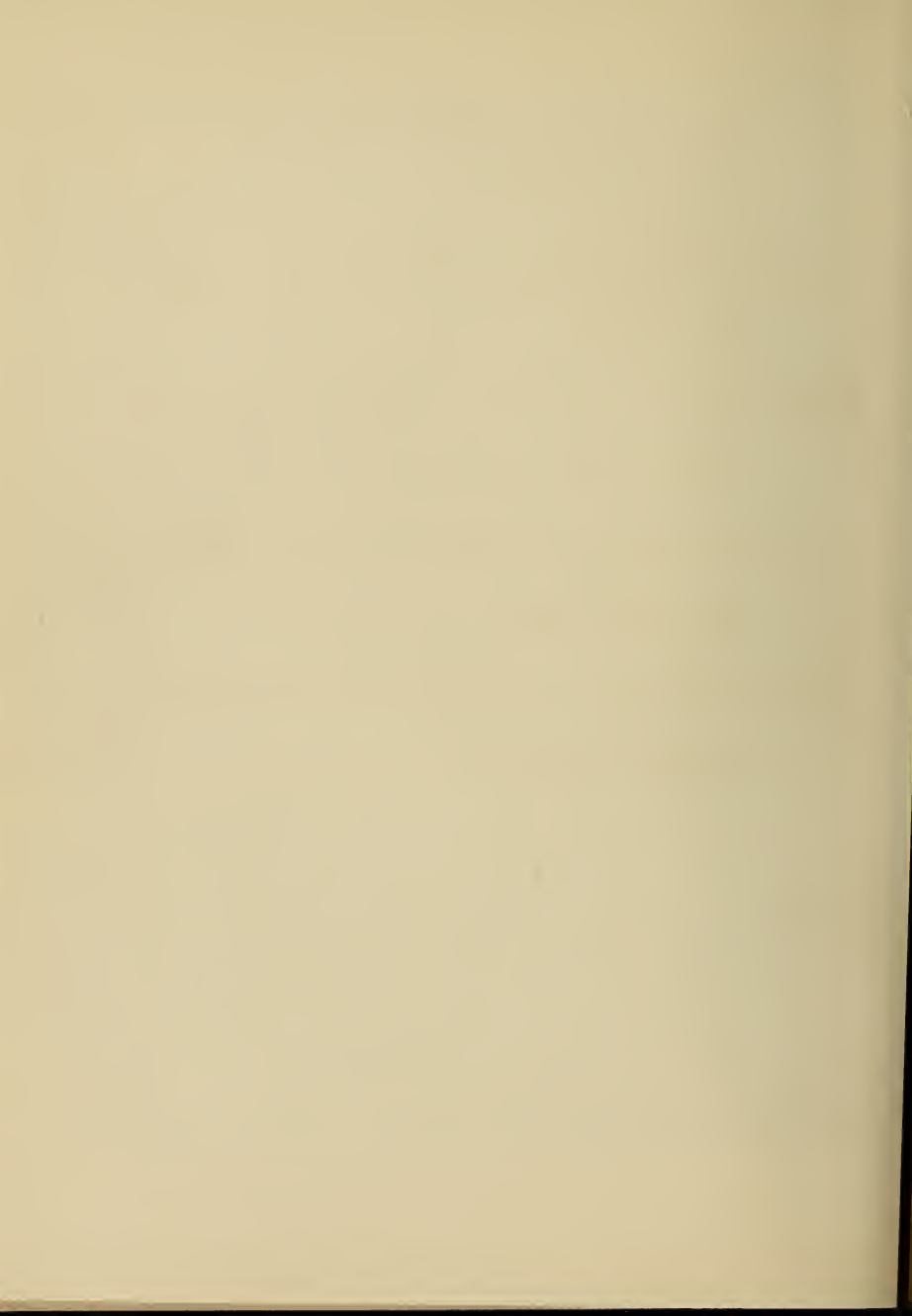




But helpless Pieces of the Game
bestowed
Upon the Checker-board of
Hill and Road;
Hither and Thither moved
and sped and stopped,
And One by One back to the
Garage towed.

The Car no Question makes of
Ayes or Noes,
But Here or There as strikes
its Fancy goes.
But the Bystander, offering
Advice,
He knows about it all—He
knows—HE KNOWS!





And if in Vain down on the
Stubborn Floor
Of Earth you lie. And weary,
cramped and sore,
You gaze to-day; you may
be jolly sure
To-morrow 'twill be worse than
'twas before!

Yesterday's Troubles made you
Mad for fair.

To-morrow's Trials too, will
make you Swear.

Crank! For you know not
What's the hitch nor Why!
Crank! For you know not
When you go, nor Where!

Each Morn a Thousand Trou-
bles cause Delay.

Yes: but you left Some unfixed
Yesterday;

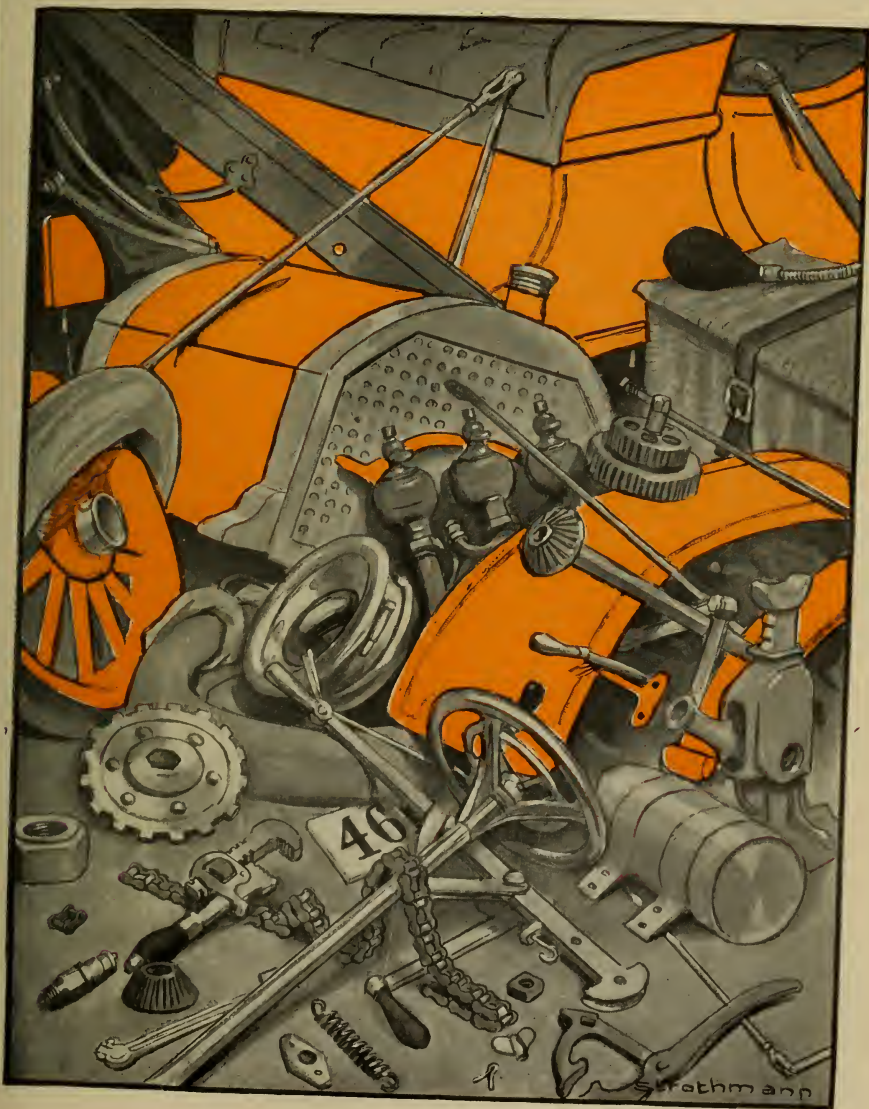
And this first Impulse that
should bring the Spark—
Confound this old Igniter, Any-
way!

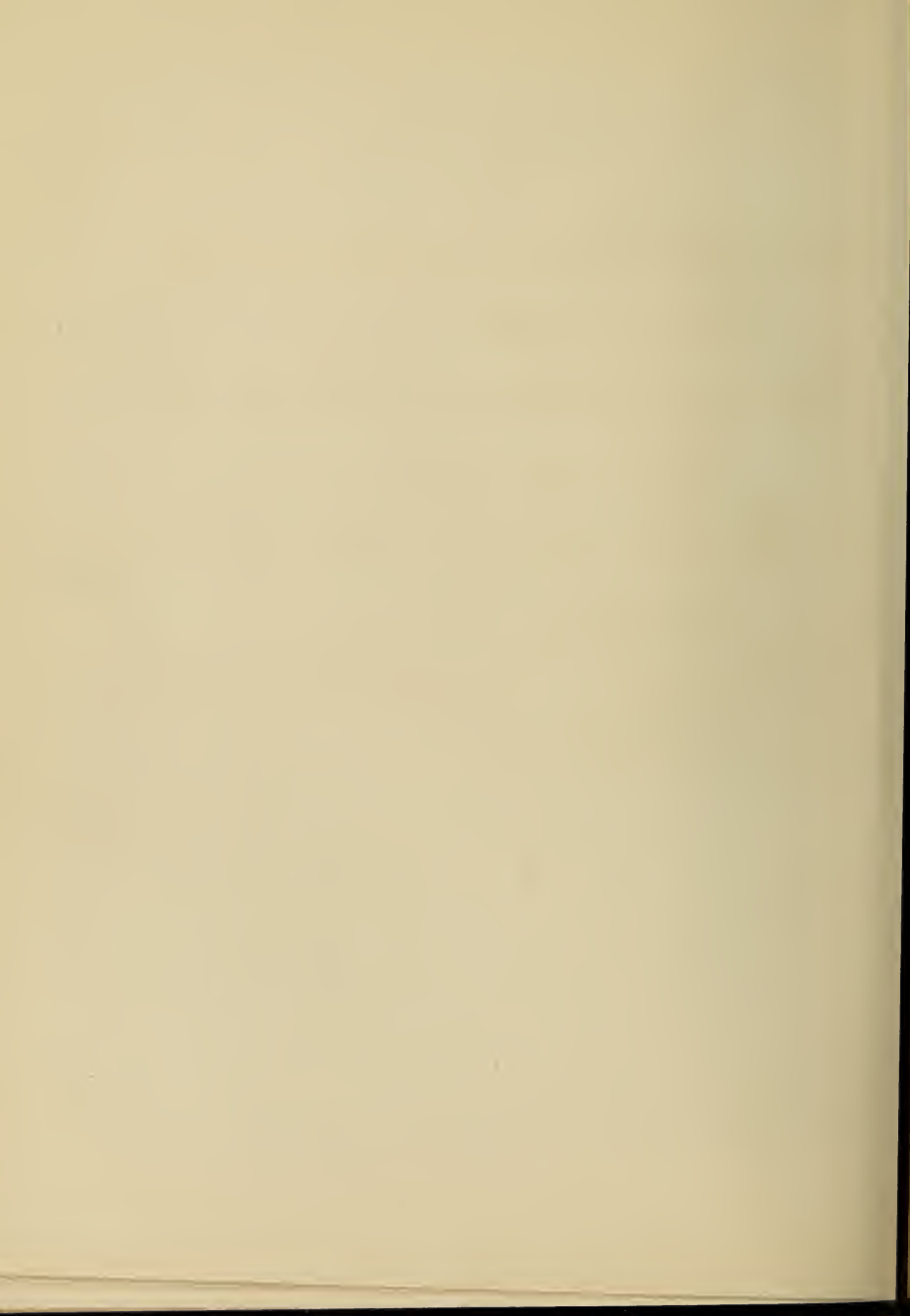
You Thaw your Freezeless
Circulation first;
Then mend your Puncture Proof
Tire where it Burst.
Helpless you Skid upon your
Anti-Skids,
But Starting a Self-Starter is the
Worst!

Perhaps you get out your
Repairing-Kit,
And try to Regulate the Thing
a bit;
You test the Coil, adjust the
Shifting-Gear,—
And then it Goes? Not so
you'd Notice it!

And that Inverted Man, who
seems to lie
Upon the Ground, and Squints
with Practis'd Eye.

Lift not your Hands to him
for Help. For he
As impotently works as you
or I.





Ah, Love, could You and I with
him conspire
To Fix this Sorry Scheme of
Things entire,
Would we not take it all
apart, and then
Remodel with no danger of
Back-Fire?

Ah, make the most of Time we
yet may spend
Before we too, into the Dust
descend;
Dust unto Dust. Under the
Car to lie,
Sans Coat, sans Breath, sans
Temper, and—sans Friend!

And that Reviving Herb, whose
Tender Green
Upon the Julep Cup is some-
times seen,
Ah, interview it lightly, for
you know
You'll need your Wits to man-
age your Machine.

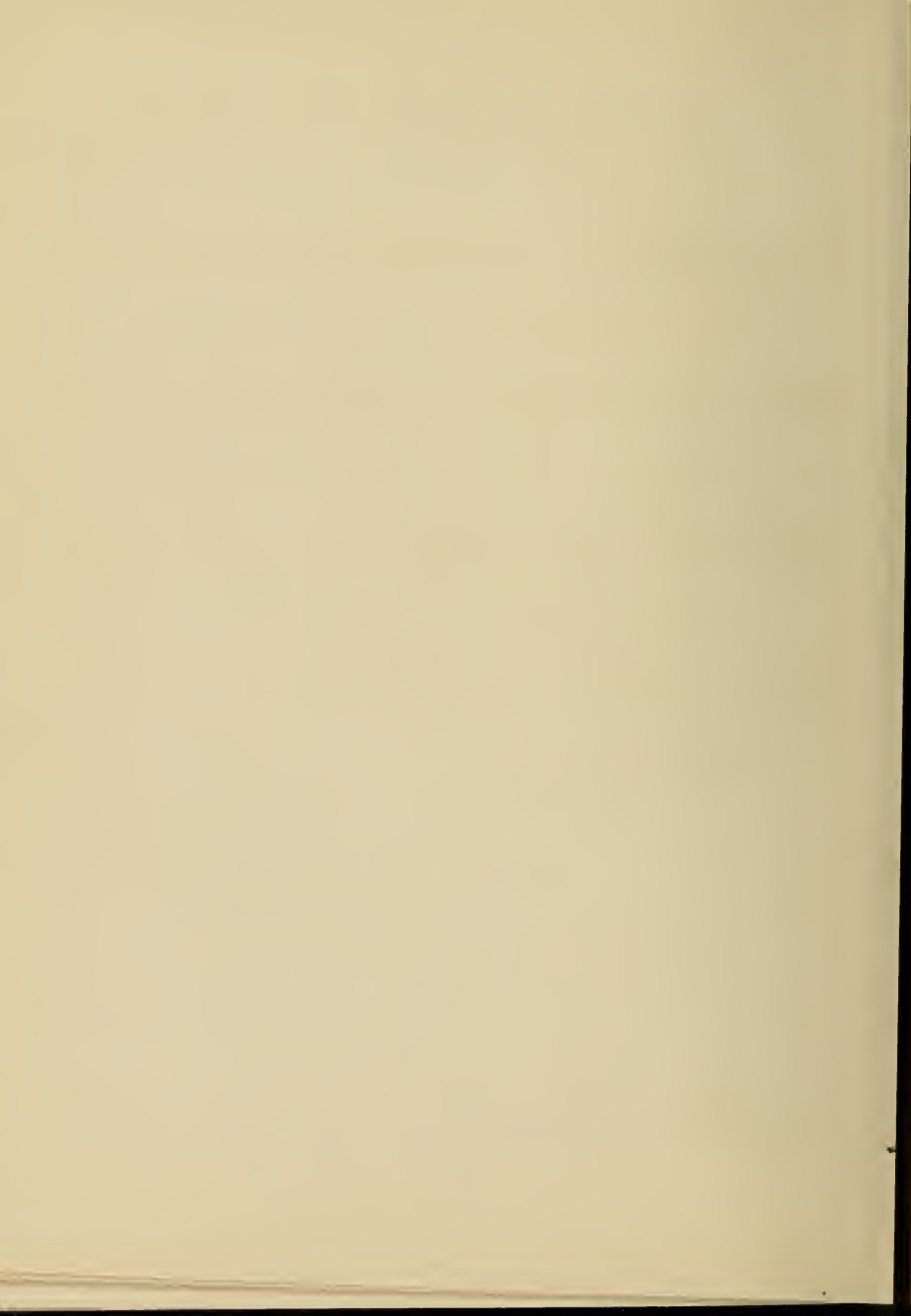
Ah, my Beloved, fill the Lamps
that shed

A steady Searchlight on our
Path ahead;

To-morrow!—Why, To-mor-
row I may be

Myself with Yesterday's Seven
Thousand Dead.





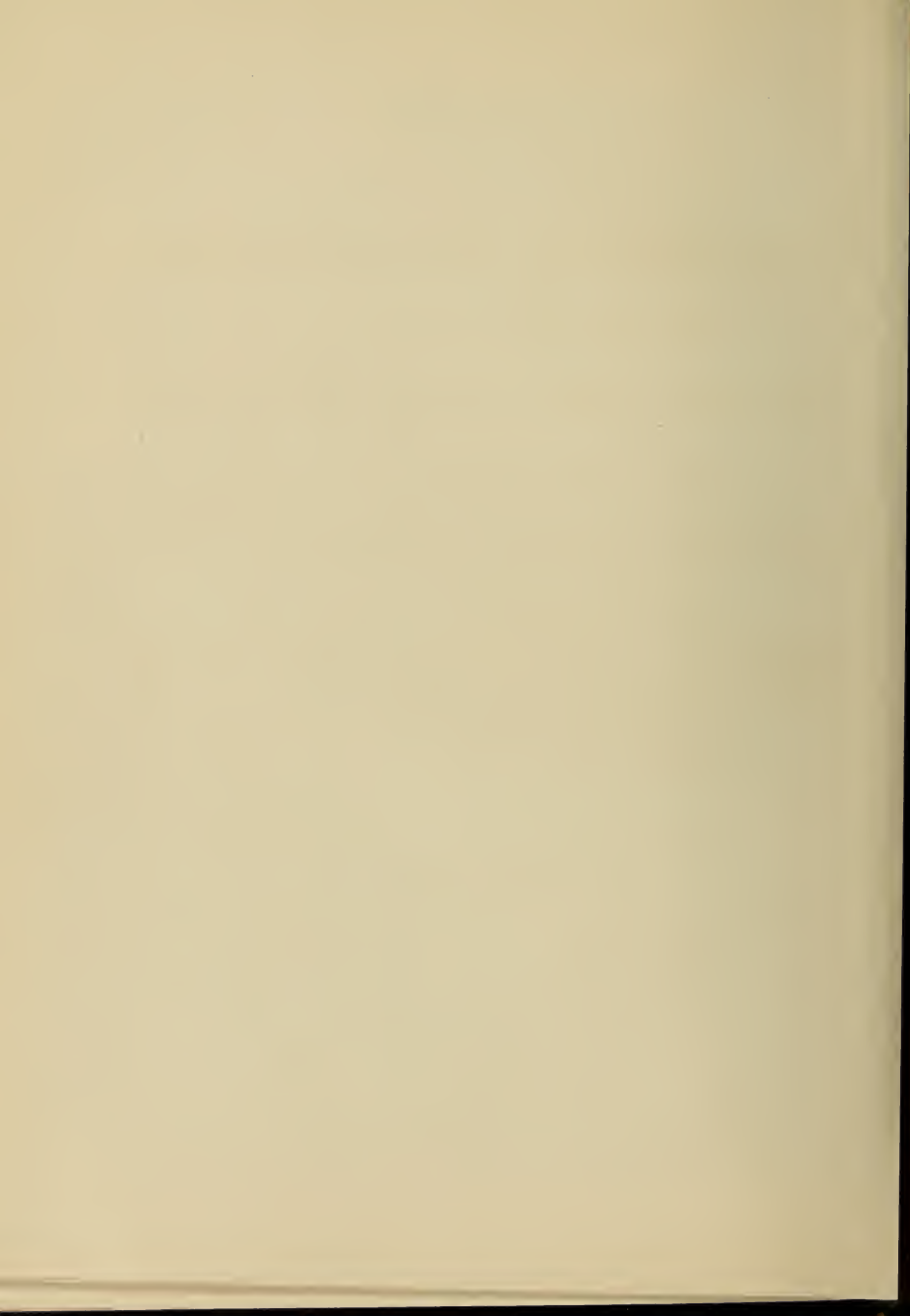
Why, if your Car can fling the
Dust aside,
And flying, through the Air of
Heaven ride,
Were't not a Shame, were't
not a Shame, I say,
Within Speed Limit, tamely to
abide?

**What! Without asking, stop
our Speed immense?**

**And, without asking, Jailward
hurried hence!**

**Oh, many a Cop of this For-
bidding Mien,
Must rue the Memory of his
Insolence!**

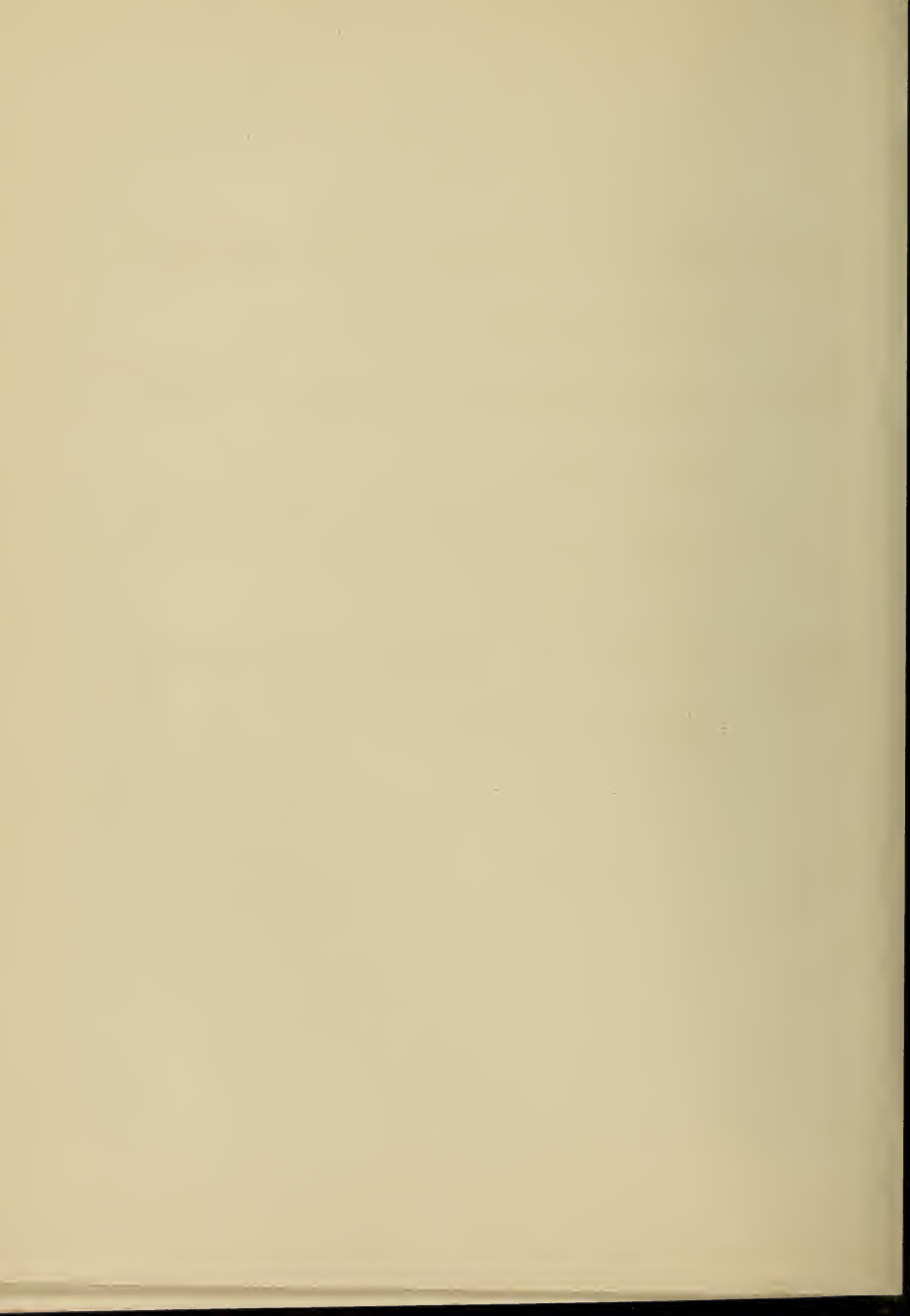




And fear not lest a Smashup
closing My
Account and Yours, Machines
no more shall fly ;
The Eternal Motorist has
ever bought
Millions of Bubbles like ours,
and will buy.

I sometimes think that every
Shining Star
Is but the Tail Lamp of a
Motor Car;
Which leap'd from Earth in
its mad Ecstasy,
And into Space went Speeding
Fast and Far.





And this I know. Though in
a Magazine
Perfectly-running Motor Cars
I've seen,
It's quite a Different Propo-
sition when
They're on the Road, and filled
With Gasolene!

The Moving Motor speeds, and
having Sped,
Moves on. Nor all the Cries
and Shrieks of Dread
Shall lure it back to settle
Damage Claims;
Not even if the Victims are
Half Dead!

And when at Last you've
mastered Belts and Bolts,
When with no fear of Side-
Slips, Jars or Jolts,
Your Sixty H. P. Racer licks
up Miles
At Lightning Speed,—turn on a
few more Volts!

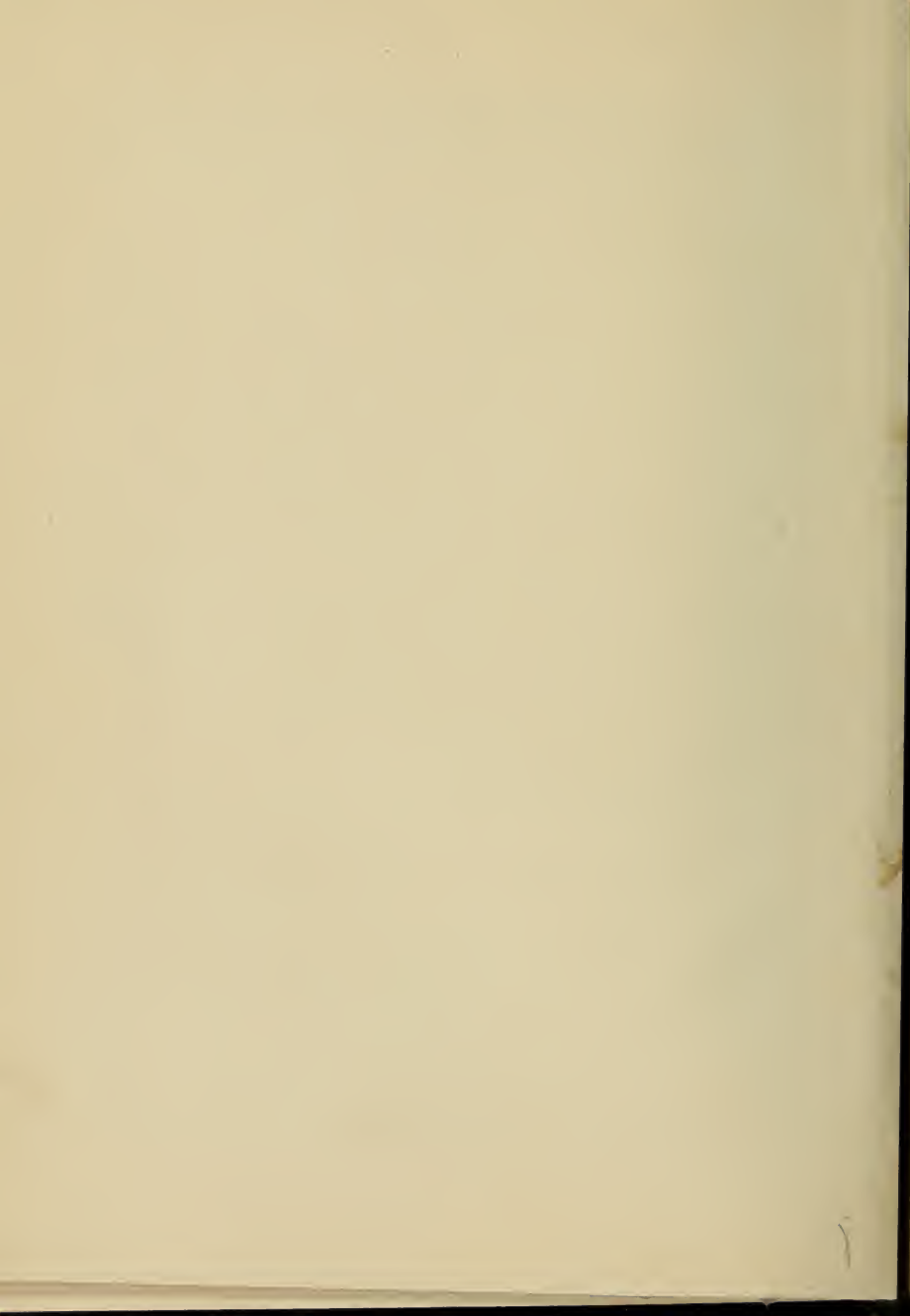
**Then in your Glorious Suc-
cess exult!**

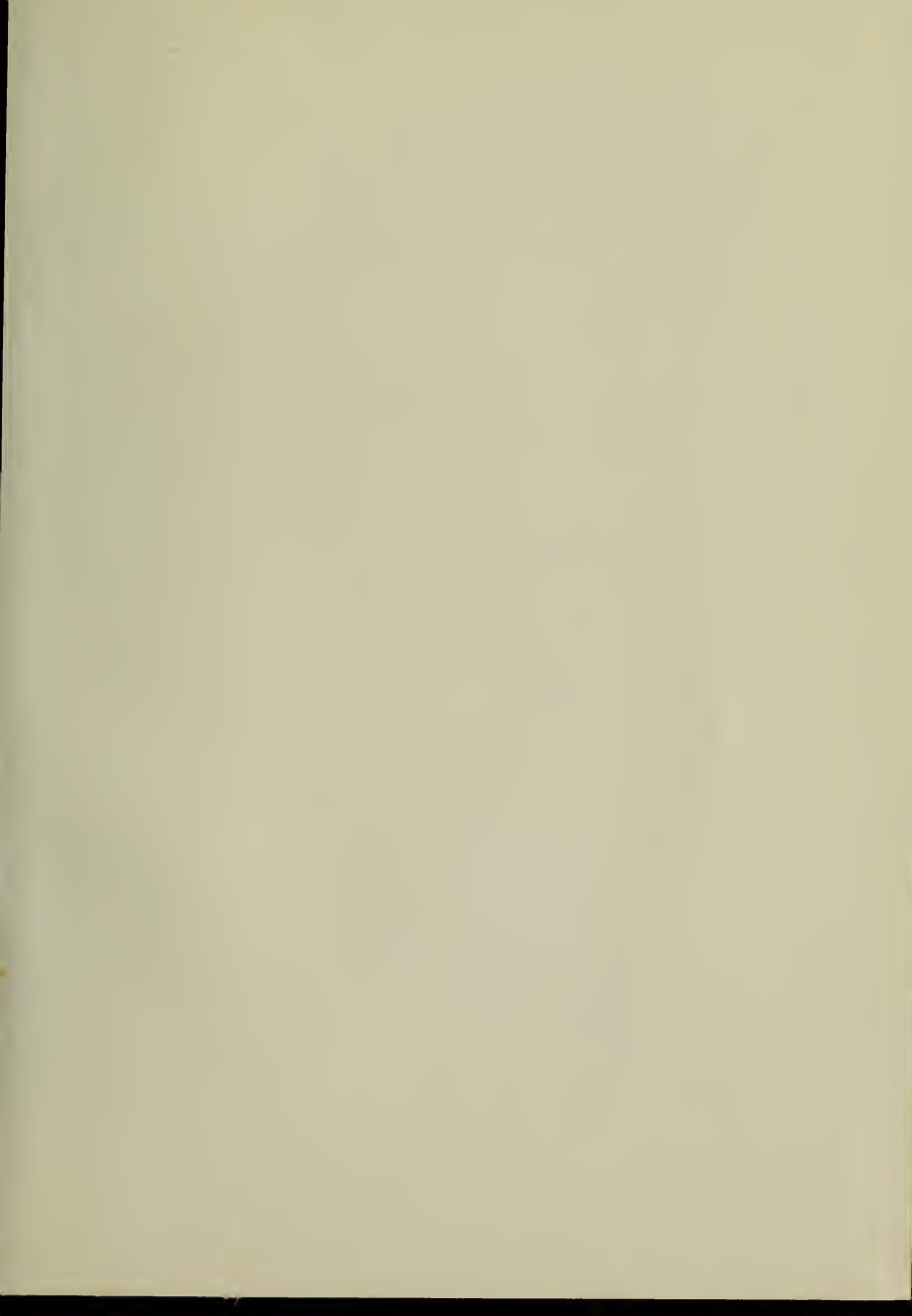
**When your Car plunges like a
Catapult,**

**Sit tight! Hold hard! Pass
Everything in Sight!**

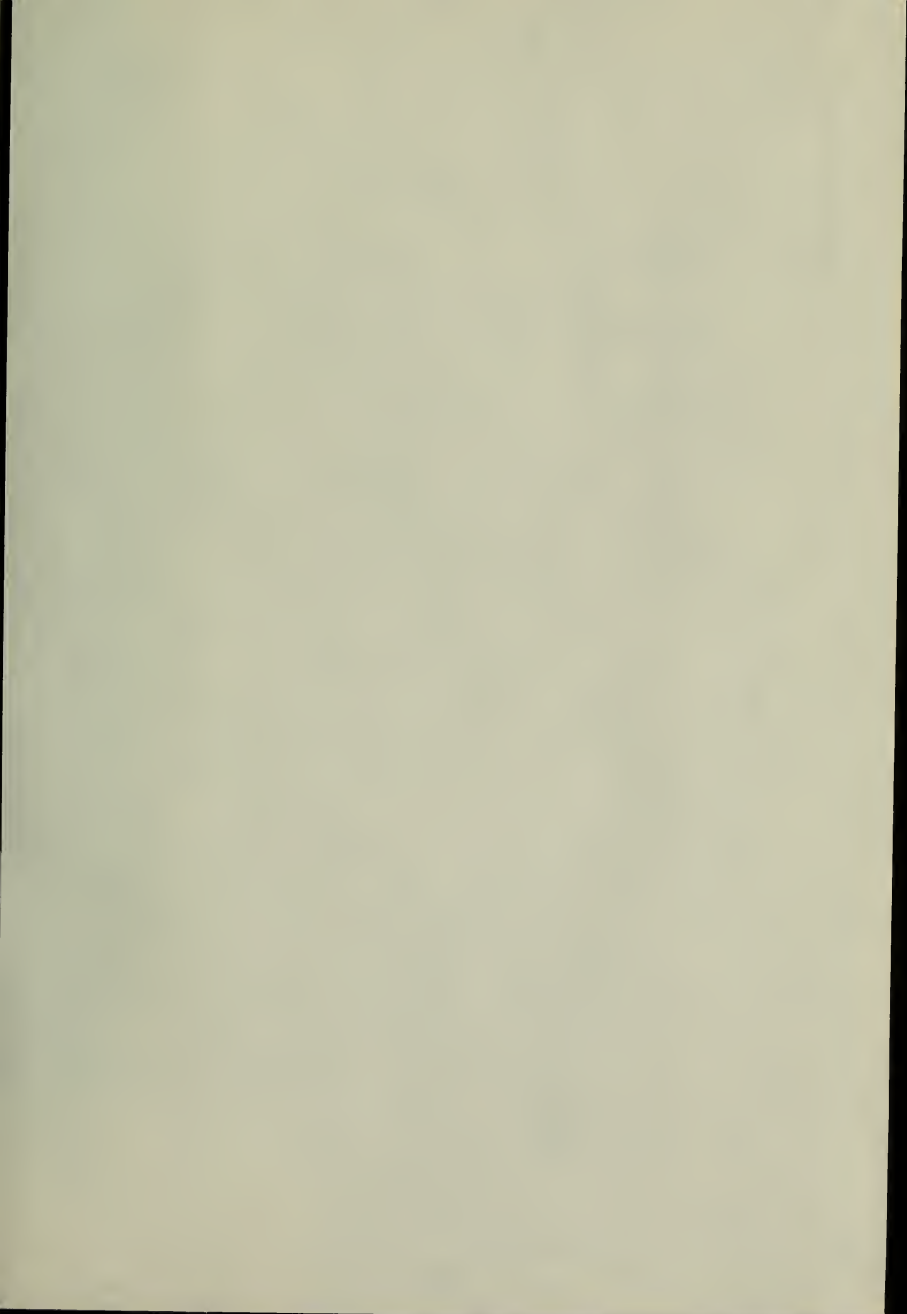
**And you will be Surprised at
the Result !**











Deacidified using the Bookkeeper process.
Neutralizing agent: Magnesium Oxide
Treatment Date: Sept. 2009

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